

Dr. Peterson
High School Counselors Event

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

It's wonderful to see you here on the Georgia Tech campus. Some of you have come a long way to get here, and we're glad you made the trip. We hope you have a safe journey home and that your time spent touring some of Georgia's best institutions of higher education has been helpful and inspirational.

As you've probably figured out from your tour of our campus, Georgia Tech is a special place. Our university excels in many areas. We are one of the nation's top public research institutions. We have an enthusiastic, high-achieving student body, and some of the nation's most accomplished faculty members. Our more than 400-acre campus in the heart of the city of Atlanta is a surprise to many. Students are encouraged to become involved in the community and in the 400 student organizations. We're preparing leaders and innovators, and many times they're engaged in service learning.

As high school counselors, you are often an early point of contact and information source for students trying to determine where they might like to attend college. You play an influential role, so please allow me to briefly make Georgia Tech's case as to why you might steer students with an aptitude for STEM education, or architecture, business, science and liberal arts, in our direction. You are uniquely positioned to do that, and yours is important work. Our country and the world will need the best minds to grapple with 21st century challenges that we can't yet even imagine.

Georgia Tech continues to be a big draw for the nation's and the world's brightest students. (Tell story of speaking at the first fall T-night event, welcoming the largest, most diverse and best-qualified class in Tech's history. You have done that 5 times in 5 years, and anticipate welcoming the best class in Tech's history again in Fall 2014.)

Increase in the # of women. Would like to say it is because of programs we've implemented over the past five years, but when I talk to young women, they will say "It was that robotics camp I attended in 8th grade." That brings to light the importance of what you do. You're shaping lives and helping inspire bright students to meet their full potential.

People frequently ask me what has changed the most the past three decades in higher education. One of the changes is the expectation that we will prepare students for outstanding careers, and the expectation that they will have good jobs after graduation. Georgia Tech is known for that.

Every fall Georgia Tech holds a career fair on campus, and hundreds of employers send representatives. Each year more than 8,500 students participate in a program by career services, and we have more than 800 on-campus visits by employers and almost 9,000 interviews. Seventy percent of Tech's students have jobs by the day they graduate. The average starting salary for all graduates is \$63,000, and that goes up to \$65,000 for STEM fields.

At Georgia Tech's main campus, approximately 7 percent of the past year's freshman class participated in our competitive-admission Distance Calculus Program. Here, too, is an opportunity for you to help your mathematically inclined students to advance their learning, even before they reach a college campus. The program allows advanced high school mathematics students to complete one or two online Georgia Tech calculus courses and earn academic credits while still in high school. Admitted students completed Georgia Tech Math 1502 and 2401 (Calculus II & III).

Our faculty and graduate teaching assistants are working hard to create environments that facilitate student learning — whether it is through improved curriculum, innovative instructional strategies, new technological tools, or other exciting materials. Our goal is

to create an environment for student success, employing new teaching methods to meet changing expectations and needs.

At Georgia Tech, we are preparing students to be leaders, in their careers, and in their communities. We have a reputation for academic excellence. But what you do every day as high school counselors is also instrumental to the success of the young people you serve. We believe the same is true of Georgia Tech. The students we impact each year will graduate, and begin to make their mark on the world. Your influence will go with them, whether they end up here at Georgia Tech or elsewhere. Thank you for the extra effort and dedication that you put into your work. We hope you will come back to visit us again, and that you will have a safe journey home.

And now, it is my pleasure to introduce our Dean of Students, John Stein. His career in higher education spans more than 30 years. Dean Stein is completing his 12th year at Tech and we are very fortunate to have him. He is professional, compassionate, and approachable. John has served as Dean of Students at two other colleges. Dean Stein's professional interests include working with college students at risk, first-year student development, student mental health issues and student leadership development. And now I give you Dean John Stein.